

## Military Says President Made Deal With Leftist

# Coup Laid to Ydigoras 'Plot'

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SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador, April 1 (Delayed)—The canny political juggling of Miguel Ydigoras Fuentes finally cost him his \$12,000-a-month job as President of Guatemala.

But the tank-backed palace revolt that unseated Sr. Ydigoras on Sunday and put hard-nosed army Col. Enrique Peralta firmly in charge is not expected to mean an end soon to Guatemala's internal political strife.

Col. Peralta, 58, who was Defense Minister until he grabbed power, has vowed "drastic" measures to protect the country from communism and from "the menace of Juan Jose Arevalo."

## STATE OF SIEGE

Guatemala is still under a state of siege. The constitution has been suspended, Congress has been abolished, telephone connections out of the country have been disrupted. Cable communication is rigidly censored. The airport and all roads to it are closed and the capitol city is under a severe curfew. Heavily armed soldiers still patrol the streets.

Unlike the army power grab in Peru last July, there is no junta in Guatemala. Col. Peralta is the undisputed boss. His crack 11,000-man garrison backs him to the hilt. He rules by fiat and his word is law.

Sr. Ydigoras has fled without resigning to Nicaragua, leaving behind him a dangerous hodge-podge of political double-dealing built around his reported efforts to make a deal with Sr. Arevalo.

Sr. Arevalo, who was president from 1945 to 1950 and has been in self-imposed exile since, slipped secretly into Guatemala on Friday night, flouting military warnings of reprisal. Sr. Arevalo said he meant to run for president in the forthcoming elections. Sr. Ydigoras and the army both branded him publicly as

*NOTE: Because of rigid censorship by the new military dictatorship in Guatemala, this dispatch was not permitted to be filed from there. Only the barest details of the coup d'etat have been allowed to get out. The story was smuggled over the border and filed from neighboring El Salvador.*

previous leftist connections—and vowed to stop him.

## DEAL

But reports circulated widely in palace and military circles that Sr. Ydigoras had made an undercover deal with Sr. Arevalo to permit him to enter the country, and to help Sr. Arevalo liquidate all political opposition in the coming campaign. And it was regarded as extremely unlikely Sr. Arevalo could have slipped into the country without Gen. Ydigoras' knowledge.

When Sr. Arevalo was president, Sr. Ydigoras was his ambassador to London. Sr. Arevalo's personal secretary then was Roberto Alejos, on whose plantation later the Bay of Pigs invaders trained.

When Sr. Arevalo arrived Friday night his private plane landed on Sr. Alejos' plantation.

Gen. Ydigoras, with his own presidential term nearing an end, and faced with the growing strength of strongman Peralta, reportedly expected to get some high diplomatic post from Sr. Arevalo in exchange for permitting him to enter the country.

Col. Peralta took advantage of the state of siege directed at containing Sr. Arevalo's subversive activities, and used his military strength to stage the coup.

## SOLDIER SHOT

With the city under martial law on Saturday night, tanks approached the presidential palace and forced the gates. One soldier who sought to defend Gen. Ydigoras was shot dead. Reportedly two others were wounded.

Gen. Ydigoras was driven in his bullet-proof Cadillac to overnight detention at a Guatemalan Air Force base. A tank was firing 200 yards behind him, a 25-millimeter cannon aimed at his

permitted to accompany him. They flew to Nicaragua on Sunday morning.

Col. Peralta justifies the coup by saying Gen. Ydigoras was unable or unwilling to take effective measures against the wave of bombings and terrorism, which the army attributed both to the communists and to Arevalo supporters—which Col. Peralta says are the same.

Meanwhile the clump-clump of boots filled the night air as soldiers scoured the city for Sr. Arevalo. Eight top Arevalo lieutenants were found, arrested and jailed and their homes were searched.

The capital city home of Sr. Alejos was ransacked and soldiers found an estimated 20 tons of munitions, including 20,000 rounds of .50-caliber cartridges believed surplus from the Bay of Pigs invasion.

These were confiscated and Sr. Alejos was peremptorily jailed.

## RADIO BROADCAST

On Sunday morning the government radio broadcast news to the nation, which listened in stolid Mayan Indian silence while martial airs blared.

World War II-vintage fighter planes roared and wheeled overhead in an impressive demonstration of Col. Peralta's strength, while camouflaged tanks rolled thru the streets.

Sr. Arevalo, as of yesterday morning, still had not

been found and there were reports he would seek asylum in the Mexican or Venezuelan embassy.

Col. Peralta promises elections "when the country returns to normal, perhaps within six months." But in the same breath he says the oppressive martial control will remain in force "indefinitely."

Col. Peralta said Guatemala was on the verge of an internal conflict resulting from widespread communist subversion and that communist infiltration has reached alarming levels. He charges Gen. Ydigoras was "complicit" in the face of this.

Observers who see former President Arevalo as a serious menace to Guatemala regard the Peralta coup as the only way out, as only a transitional control, and insist the undemocratic upset of constitutional order is a lesser evil than the clear danger of a communist takeover.

Others know Col. Peralta as a forceful, determined, non-nonsense officer and fear he may not relinquish power as quickly as he grabbed it.